

REMARKS

To further prosecution of the instant application, Applicants have amended herein Claim 50 and respectfully request reconsideration. The amendments to Claim 50 do not add subject matter and have antecedent basis. In addition, Applicants have added herein new Claims 70-73. Claims currently pending in the instant application include Claims 50 and 52-73 with Claims 50 and 70 being in independent form.

Rejection of Claims 50 and 52-69 Under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) and § 103(a)

Claims 50 and 52-69 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Kono et al. (“Kono”), Gaa et al. (“Gaa”), or Cossement et al. (“Cossement”). Alternatively, Claims 50 and 52-69 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kono, Gaa or Cossement. Applicants respectfully disagree for the reasons given below.

None of the cited prior art patents teach the at least partially coated article of Claim 50, and, more particularly, do not teach the substantially homogeneous superabsorbent water-resistant polyacrylate polymer coating including a polyacrylate polymer precursor in aqueous solution, a non-particulate viscosity-modifying agent in the form of a solution or dispersion, and a film forming binder in aqueous solution that is compatible with the water-absorbing polyacrylate polymer. In particular, neither Kono, Gaa nor Cossement explicitly disclose an article at least partially coated with a substantially homogeneous superabsorbent water-resistant polyacrylate polymer coating including a non-particulate viscosity-modifying agent and a water-soluble superabsorbent polymer precursor. In addition, Gaa and Cossement do not explicitly disclose that their glass fiber sizing compositions are a substantially homogeneous superabsorbent water-resistant polyacrylate polymer coating. Such water absorbing properties of the glass fiber sizings/coatings of Gaa or Cossement would compromise the mechanical and performance properties of the composite articles formed with the sized/coated glass fibers of Gaa or Cossement. Kono discloses a water-absorbing resin layer; however, Kono does not explicitly disclose a substantially homogeneous water-resistant polyacrylate coating including a non-particulate modifying agent as specified in Claim 50. Kono, Gaa or

Cossement does not teach each and every element specified in Claim 50 and therefore does not anticipate the claimed invention.

In addition, neither Kono, Gaa nor Cossement provide a teaching or suggestion that would motivate one of ordinary skill to modify the teachings of Kono, Gaa or Cossement to achieve the coated article of Claim 50. Kono does not provide a teaching, suggestion or motivation to modify the water-absorbent composition of Kono to be a substantially homogenous water-resistant polyacrylate coating including a non-particulate modifying agent as specified in Claim 50.

As noted above, Gaa and Cossement teach away from an article at least partially coated with a substantially homogeneous water-resistant polyacrylate polymer coating for the reasons noted above. Applicants respectfully request the Examiner indicate those portions of the Gaa or Cossement disclosure that provide a teaching, suggestion or motivation to one of ordinary skill in the art to modify the teachings of Gaa or Cossement to achieve the invention of Claim 50, as well as the Examiner's reasons why such teaching, suggestion or motivation would render the claimed invention obvious.

Applicants respectfully request identification of the teaching, suggestion or motivation in Kono, Gaa or Cossement that would render obvious an article at least partially coated with a substantially homogeneous superabsorbent water-resistant polyacrylate polymer coating including a non-particulate viscosity-modifying agent and a water-soluble superabsorbent polymer precursor as specified in Claim 50.

Applicants respectfully submit in view of the disclosures of Kono, Gaa and Cossement, Claim 50 is not anticipated by the cited prior art under § 102(b) nor is unpatentable over the cited prior art under § 103(a). Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection Claim 50.

Claims 52-69 depend from Claim 50 and are patentable for the reasons given above. Withdrawal of the rejection of Claims 52-69 under §§ 102(b) and 103(a) is respectfully requested.

Rejection of Claims 50 and 52-69 Under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

Claims 50 and 52-69 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Arroyo et al. ("Arroyo") or Geursen et al. ("Geursen") in combination with Barch et al. ("Barch"). Applicants respectfully disagree for the reasons given below.

Neither Arroyo nor Geursen provide a teaching or suggestion that would motivate one of ordinary skill to modify the teachings of Arroyo or Geursen to achieve the coated article of Claim 40. In particular, Arroyo does not provide a teaching or suggestion that would motivate modification of the disclosed water-swelling liquid superabsorbent homopolymers and copolymers to achieve a substantially homogeneous superabsorbent water-resistant polyacrylate polymer coating including a non-particulate viscosity-modifying agent and a water-soluble superabsorbent polymer precursor as specified in Claim 50. Similarly, Geursen does not provide a teaching or suggestion that would motivate modification of the disclosed superabsorbent coating composition, including a water-in-oil emulsion with a water-soluble superabsorbent polymer in the aqueous phase, to the claimed article at least partially coated with a substantially homogeneous superabsorbent water-resistant polyacrylate polymer coating including a non-particulate viscosity-modifying agent and a water-soluble superabsorbent polymer precursor.

In addition, Barch does not provide a teaching, suggestion or motivation that would modify the teachings of Arroyo or Geursen to achieve the invention of Claim 50. In particular, Barch discloses a sizing composition including an organic solvent or water carrier and a film-forming polymer, such as aqueous solutions or emulsions of cellulosic material. These teachings are in direct contrast to the claimed non-particulate, viscosity-modifying agent as specified in Claim 50 that helps to achieve a substantially homogeneous superabsorbent water-resistant polyacrylate coating on the claimed article. The coating of Claim 50 is a composition formulated to avoid use of such particulate components as cellulosic material to modify viscosity. Therefore, Applicants respectfully submit the cited combinations of prior art do not teach or suggest the invention of Claim 50.

Applicants respectfully request the Examiner identify those portions of the Arroyo, Geursen or Barch disclosures that, when combined as the Examiner suggests,

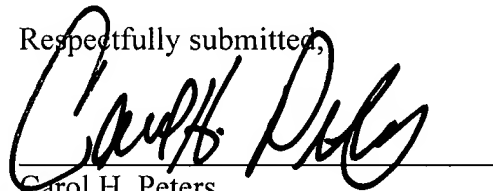
provide a teaching, suggestion or motivation to one of ordinary skill in the art to modify the teachings of Arroyo or Guersen in combination with Barch to achieve the invention of Claim 50. In addition, Applicants respectfully request the Examiner articulate the reasons why the suggested combinations of teaching, suggestion or motivation would render the invention of Claim 50 obvious.

Applicants respectfully submit Claim 50 is not obvious in view of the cited combinations of prior art and respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection of Claim 50 under § 103(a). In addition, Claims 52-69 depend from Claim 50 and are patentable for the reasons given above.

Patentability of New Claims 70-73

Applicants respectfully submit that new Claims 70-73 are patentable in view of the cited prior art for at least the reasons given above.

Respectfully submitted,



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